



**September 10th, 2020
1:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.**

Virtual WebEX Call

Meeting Minutes

Video Conference Information:

JOIN WEBEX MEETING

Join By Video: <https://bit.ly/3iio5ir>

Meeting Number (access code): 126 944 5445

Meeting Password: 7tSMeAMVy42 (78763268 from phones and video systems)

JOIN BY PHONE

Join By Phone: 408-418-9388

Meeting Number (access code): 1269445445#

Meeting Password: 78763268#

In Attendance:

Virginia Asian Advisory Board Members: Mr. Tae Aderman; Ms. Melody Agbisit, Ms. Suja Amir; Ms. Laura Beldin; Mr. Paul Chhabra; Ms. Julia Chun; Dr. Nina Ha; Mr. Razi Hashmi; Ms. Hyun Lee; Mr. Justin Lo; Mr. Bao Ly; Mr. Praveendharan Meyyan (Secretary); Mr. Patrick Mulloy; Ms. May Nivar (Chair); Ms. Carla Okouchi; Dr. Marie Sankaran Raval; Mr. Ssunny Shah; Ms. Da Lin Sheth; Ms. Mona Siddiqui ; Mr. Jewan Tiwari; Mr. Pient Tran

Governor's Office Staff: Mr. Shawn Soares (AAPI Outreach), Ms. Maribel Castañeda (Director of Appointments and Director of Latino Outreach)

Legal Counsel: Mr. Justin Bell (Assistant Attorney General, Office of the Attorney General, Commonwealth of VA)

Guests: Ms. Kelly Thomasson (Secretary of the Commonwealth of VA); Ms. Tracy DeShazor (Deputy Secretary of the Commonwealth of VA); Ms. Pam Kestner (Chief Deputy and Acting Deputy of Housing, Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development); Ms. Courtney Dozier (Policy Director, Office of Governor Ralph S. Northam); Mr. Atif Qarni (Secretary of Education); Sookyoung Oh (NAKASEC DC Area Director)

Welcome and Meeting Overview

- Deputy Secretary DeShazor welcomed attendees to the meeting and mentioned she is looking forward to a very productive meeting of the Virginia Asian Advisory Board.
- Deputy Secretary DeShazor went over ground rules and housekeeping for the meeting

Virginia Asian Advisory Board General Meeting

- Ms. Nivar (Chair) called the Meeting to order at 1:04 PM.
- Ms. Nivar welcome the Board members including the six new appointed members.
- Ms. Nivar thanked the outgoing members for their dedication and service to the Virginia Asian Advisory Board. Ms. Nivar mentioned that Mr. Lin and Ms. Mohindra will be joining the meeting later on.
- Mr. Meyyan (Secretary) conducted a roll call for meeting attendance.
- Mr. Meyyan informed the Board that there was a quorum of board members at the meeting.

June Meeting Minutes Approval and September Meeting Agenda Adoption

- June 30th, 2020 meeting minutes were reviewed by the Board.
- First Amendment was noted by Ms. Nivar that the second bullet on page 3 be changed to “strike”.
- Second Amendment was noted by Mr. Lo to correct “Civic” in the header on page 8.
- Third Amendment was noted by Mr. Lo to add “for the report” to the second bullet on page 8.
- The June 30th, 2020 Minutes were moved to be adopted with the noted amendments by Mr. Lo and seconded by Ms. Chun.
- Mr. Meyyan conducted a roll call vote on the motion. Mr. Meyyan noted that those members not present at the June 30th, 2020 meeting as well as new board members had to abstain from voting.

Voting in the Affirmative: Ms. Melody Agbisit, Ms. Julia Chun, Mr. Razi Hashmi, Ms. Hyun Lee; Mr. Justin Lo; Mr. Praveendharan Meyyan; Mr. Patrick Mulloy; Ms. May Nivar; Ms. Carla Okouchi; Dr. Marie Sankaran Raval; Mr. Ssunny Shah, Ms. Mona Siddiqui; Mr. Jewan Tiwari

Voting in the Negative: None

Voting to Abstain: Mr. Tae Aderman, Mr. Suja Amir, Ms. Laura Beldin, Mr. Paul Chhabra, Dr. Nina Ha, Mr. Bao Ly, Dr. Marie Sankaran Raval, Ms. Da Lin Sheth, Mr. Pient Tran

- Mr. Meyyan previewed the June meeting agenda.

Public Comments:

- Mr. Meyyan announced that public comments were now being accepted.
- Mr. Meyyan noted that there were no members of the general public on the call and no questions were submitted prior.

- The public comments period ended without any comments recorded.
- Later on, Ms. Oh from NAKASEC provided comments that she read out to the board. She highlighted two stories from community members who were affected by the pandemic.

Chair Report:

- Ms. Nivar recapped the meeting with the Governor and presentation of the annual report.
- Ms. Nivar thanked the subcommittee chairs.
- Ms. Nivar mentioned the Census deadline to respond was September 30th and that Mr. Lin and Mr. Lee joined the Governor at his Census Press Conference.
- Ms. Nivar stated that Executive Board elections will be later this year, date TBD and asked board members to start thinking if they're interested.
- Ms. Nivar that she is working with Deputy Secretary DeShazor on 2021 Board Meeting dates.
- Ms. Nivar mentioned the updated contact list and proposed committee assignments.

Administration Update and Asian American and Pacific Islander Outreach:

- Deputy Secretary DeShazor stated that the Special Assistant for Advisory Board Administrator. role is vacant. She asked the board members to ask interested applicants to apply and let her know.
- Deputy Secretary DeShazor asked that all board correspondence be send to VAAB@virginia.governor.com.
- Deputy Secretary DeShazor stated that the website has been updated with new Board members while outgoing board members have been removed. The website has also been updated to include information on COVID-19. Mr. Soares has been added to the staff page and Ms. Campbell has been removed.
- Deputy Secretary DeShazor asked that Board members let the staff know if any content or graphics need to be made/created for our social media channels.
- Deputy Secretary DeShazor stated that the staff and administration is looking for ways to keep the outgoing Board members involved.
- Deputy Secretary DeShazor mentioned that they are trying to finalize the Standard Operating Procedures.
- Deputy Secretary DeShazor mentioned to please complete committee signups so the staff can keep track of who is on what committee.
- Deputy Secretary DeShazor mentioned that staff will follow up to make sure contact information is up to date.
- Deputy Secretary DeShazor mentioned that Ms. Castañeda is no longer the point of contact for Board business. Deputy Secretary DeShazor is the contact in the interim.
- Ms. Nivar asked when we should expect the finalized Standard Operating Procedures. Deputy Secretary DeShazor said to expect them at the end of September.
- Mr. Soares introduced himself and congratulated the new Board members.
- Mr. Soares went over his background mentioning that he originally from India and then moved to Loudoun county. He then attended VCU and during his time there interned with Congressman McEachin. In 2019, he interned with the Democratic Party and then was a Legislative Aide for Delegate Suhas Subramanyam.

- Mr. Soares wants to make the AAPI Community has a voice and to elevate their hopes and concerns to the administration.
- Mr. Soares asked the Board to help him keep track of religious and other AAPI ethic holidays and observances.
- Mr. Soares mentioned that any announcements or information can be sent out via the administration's newsletter. So please pass any information along to him. The general public can sign up for the newsletter on the Governor's website.
- Mr. Soares went over events that he has attended since starting his position and went over the board appointments process with Ms. Castañeda. He mentioned that there is an emphasis in wanting more AAPI board members.
- Mr. Soares had a brief Q&A session with Board members.
- Mr. Shah asked about grants. How many people have applied for it and does the administration have other stats?
- Mr. Soares and Deputy Secretary DeShazor mentioned that they don't have the stats on hand but will follow up after the meeting with Mr. Shah. Mr. Soares made a note of it.
- Mr. Soares mentioned that he can be reached at shawn.soares@governor.virginia.com

The Virginia Asian Advisory Board took a short break and resumed business at 2:00 PM EST

- Deputy Secretary DeShazor asked for feedback and thoughts on the Administration's census presentations.
- Ms. Nivar wondered about how we can get the word out about such opportunities sooner to the community.
- Deputy Secretary DeShazor asked how they can do better outreach to the community
- Mr. Hashmi mentioned that sending it out as early as possible with maximum lead time is important while also on different mediums such as Whatsapp etc.
- Deputy Secretary DeShazor asked about the timing of the presentations (when to do them); if it's best at noon, after work, after dinner etc.
- Mr. Hashmi mentioned having diversity in timing, perhaps offer the same presentation at a variety of times.
- Mr. Lo wondered if the purpose of such presentations is to reach out to advocates of the issues presented or to community members who may be unaware of the content.
- Deputy Secretary DeShazor stated the audience is expected to be a combination of both. They want to reach all stakeholders that an issue may be pertinent to.
- Ms. Agbisit asked about the feasibility of weekend webinars because of weekday work schedules.
- Deputy Secretary DeShazor mentioned that is harder to do because staff need weekends off as well, but they will consider it.
- Ms. Nivar mentioned combining efforts for certain presentations for board topics which may affect multiple communities.
- Ms. Okouchi mentioned using different platforms to push recordings after the fact. Deputy Secretary DeShazor mentioned staff will look at any and all options.

The Virginia Asian Advisory Board took a break from 1:57-2:03

Administration Update COVID-19: Virginia Rent and Mortgage Relief Program (RMRP)

- Ms. Kestner introduced herself to the Board.
- Ms. Kestner replayed the mission statement of her department and their commitment to creating safe, affordable and prosperous communities to live, work and do business in.
- Ms. Kestner went over Governor Northam's Executive Order 25 concerning the reduction of evictions in the Commonwealth.
- Ms. Kestner mentioned that \$50 million has been allocated to help keep individuals and families housed during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Ms. Kestner stated that \$3.3 million in funds were proposed for a Prevention and Diversion of Evictions Pilot program.
- Ms. Kestner went over the Rent and Mortgage Relief Program (RMRP). The program was designed to support and ensure housing stability across the Commonwealth during the COVID-19 pandemic. The program funds are available from April 1st, 2020 to December 30th, 2020.
- Ms. Kestner stated the eligibility and requirements for RMRP:
 - Have a valid lease or mortgage statement
 - Experienced a loss of income due to COVID-19
 - Have rent or mortgage that is at or below 150% below Fair Market Rate
 - Have a gross household income at or below 80% of area median income based on current month's income
- Ms. Kestner stated that RMRP financial assistance will now pay for 100% of the current month's mortgage or rent (plus associated fees) and 100% of past due mortgage or rent (plus associated fees) during the duration of the program.
- RMRP providers share other community resources with households.
- Ms. Kestner stated that RMRP assistance provided through August 26th:
 - 4,260 households have received assistance or been processed
 - 2,400 household assisted in rent – 4.08 million in rent payments
 - \$277,000 in Mortgage assistance disseminated
 - Assisted over 2,700 children (1,375 under the age of 9)
 - Approximately 12% of assistance provided to Latinx/Hispanic households or units, 70% of assistance to Non-Hispanic households including 7.05% Asian (they do not require households to provide race or ethnicity).
- Ms. Nivar asked Ms. Kestner on language assistance. Ms. Kestner replied that many of the grantees have language access via a language translation service. The program is eager to have translated documents and asked the Board members to assist if possible.
- Ms. Chun asked Ms. Kestner if faith-based organizations could be leveraged to get the word out to the community. Ms. Kestner answered that they work very closely with the Department of Social Services to reach a wide audience. She asked the Board to provide her additional lists of organizations if available.
- Mr. Shah asked how hotels are handled by the program. Ms. Kestner said they are definitely including hotels and motels. Requirements are that guests have stayed there for more than 90 days and can provide documentation that they did so.

Northam Administration – The Final Year:

- Deputy Secretary DeShazor thanked the Board for their work this year and for the annual report.
- Deputy Secretary DeShazor asked the Board to think about a few things for next year. What will the final AAPI Heritage month celebrations look like? What will be the priorities for the Board in the final year? How will we engage the community and get information into the hands of those who need it?
- Ms. Beldin mentioned access in-language in licensing. It would bring in revenue for the state and also help the careers of many AAPI community members.
- Dr. Sheth mentioned she has gotten feedback from students who have covered their parent's rent. She mentioned another area that might need attention is international students who do not get economic assistance due to citizenship status.
- Mr. Ly is concerned with community members receiving the correct resources. He reiterated needing to go to the community in places like churches and community centers where they gather. He also stressed the importance of working with other likeminded AAPI organizations to help distribute information and messages.
- Ms. Siddique mentioned it might be good to focus geographically to connect with churches, organizations, town halls etc. as a way to develop relationships.
- Deputy Secretary DeShazor replied to Ms. Siddique that the African American Advisory Board is putting together a survey for organizations to push out to get feedback to engage audiences in different venues.
- Deputy Secretary DeShazor mentioned her and Secretary Thomasson also have had conversations on how to better engage those with disabilities.
- Ms. Amir commented that disaggregating data when possible may help us with some of these outreach methods.

Policy Update: Special Session Report Out

- Ms. Dozier thanked the Board for the Annual Report.
- Ms. Dozier mentioned that they will likely be a reforecast of the budget and that will inform the priorities of the administration moving forward.
- Ms. Dozier mentioned that the Governor wanted legislators to come back to work on police reform.
- Ms. Dozier mentioned that the Governor signed a budget bill for the election which included \$2 million in absentee ballot postage and the creation of ballot drop boxes.
- Ms. Nivar asked what the next steps are for the reports to inform the new Board members.
- Ms. Dozier and the team are working on determining which recommendations are budgeting, which will need a bill in the legislature and which ones can be enacted via executive order. Subject matter experts (SMEs) will be brought in to discuss as needed.
- Ms. Dozier mentioned the legislature will meet in January for 45 days and decisions will need to be made on which would become bills to send over as Governor's bills. These decisions need to be made by November.
- Ms. Nivar asked what the best way for the Board would be to stay on top of the recommendations to help see them through to becoming policy

- Ms. Dozier answered that once the administration has made determinations and figured out budgets, staff will ask for support for messaging and support on the recommendations.
- Deputy Secretary DeShazor wants to commit to follow up on the recommendations and do a debrief with the Board.
- Ms. Nivar mentioned that some aspects of a debrief have been done before. For example, in May, administration officials shared updates on recommendations made in the previous year.
- Ms. Siddique mentioned that it would be nice to unpack the recommendations that already exist.
- Mr. Lo mentioned that it would be prudent to know the barrier to enacting the recommendations that don't make it so that they may be overcome or not repeated in future years.
- Ms. Amir asked if there was legislation affecting licensing for healthcare professional. Ms. Dozier stated that off the top of her head, no.
- Mr. Mulloy asked why the Virginia House or Senate does not have more of a role enacting policy regarding investments and trade. Ms. Dozier said that the majority of policy related to those topics happens through the administration, but the legislature plays a role through the budgetary process.
- Mr. Bell chimed in to mention that our Senate is different from the United States Senate in that our legislature is part time.

Recap: Annual Report Submissions

- Mr. Nivar would like to see that between this meeting and the next on December 10th, the committees have followed up meetings with administration officials on the recommendations. Officials may have follow-up questions for the committees. She asked Board members to think about what to do if a recommendation doesn't go through. Consider the next steps for the recommendation but keep in mind this is the final year of this administration.
- Ms. Agbisit asked questions on building upon recommendations.
- Ms. Siddique mentioned that it may be a good idea for committees to start meeting separately to start brainstorming for next year.
- Mr. Hashmi mentioned that was easier to carve commit time when we met in person, but we may have to do smaller meetings as well.
- Mr. Meyyan mentioned that it would be nice to have an ongoing record of where previous recommendations are in the process so that new members would have a reference to what has been proposed.
- Ms. Nivar mentioned that in the past they've had one Board member document follow-ups. If you are interested in this role, please email Ms. Nivar.
- Dr. Raval mentioned it may be prudent to have that responsibility split up among one person in each committee.

Administration Update: Commonwealth

- Secretary Thomasson reiterated the importance of the Census
- Secretary Thomasson mentioned she appreciated the discussion around other mediums such as Whatsapp, WeChat, Youtube etc.
- Secretary Thomasson reiterated that there are still vacancies among the over 300 Commonwealth Boards and Commissions. She mentioned that diversity is important, and they want to make sure AAPIs are represented.
- Mr. Tran asked if there was statistics of AAPI representation on boards and commissions
- Secretary Thomasson stated they submit a diversity report to the legislature and make sure to cover all forms of diversity.
- Secretary Thomasson mentioned that so far, there have only been 400 applicants that identify as AAPI.
- Ms. Amir asked if there were certain boards that had urgent vacancies. Secretary Thomasson replied that they are trying to fill all.
- Mr. Soares mentioned vacancies on the Board of Disabilities and Board of Dentistry as examples.

Administration Update: Education

- Secretary Qarni greeted the Board and mentioned that he wished he could attend the presentation with the Governor.
- Secretary Qarni mentioned that most school divisions are now open with the few remaining will open next week
- Secretary Qarni mentioned that 80% of students are 100% virtual. They are monitoring how things are going
- Secretary Qarni mentioned that a lot of initiatives have been frozen, but the budget has been passed so there is reason to be optimistic
- Secretary Qarni mentioned that he would like to have an Asian American elective course alongside ones for Latinx, Indigenous and African American courses in the school system
- Secretary Qarni is focused on school desegregation. Thomas Jefferson and Maggie Walker are school where some pilot reforms are proposed.
- Secretary Qarni asked the Board members to have conversations with AAPI community members about these reforms to uplift underrepresented communities
- Ms. Siddiqui asked for guidance for having conversations on the reforms. Secretary Qarni mentioned to start conversations on diversity and perspective. He mentioned that when he talks to students and teachers, they want the changes. The resistance has come from vocal parents. Secretary Qarni would like a more wholistic approach rather than just an achievement test.
- Secretary Qarni encouraged Board members to have meaningful dialogue
- Secretary Qarni mentioned that one of the groups that has seen a large increase in suicide is Asian boys
- Mr. Hashmi mentioned that just because we come from minority communities it doesn't mean we are immune to having biases ourselves. He asked what are some of the opportunities the Department of Education is taking in terms of education students on understanding Virginia's history, perspectives etc.?

- Secretary Qarni mentioned there is an 80-page report by the African American Education commission on some of those topics. The Department of Education is making edits on standards and starting to train educators on the new material.
- Ms. Agbisit asked if they are able to engage parents in the addition of API history to the curriculum. She mentioned the importance of mental health and adding new social and emotional standards and that it's especially important during the pandemic.
- help finalize the recommendations

Miscellaneous Board Items

- Mr. Lin and Ms. Mohindra joined the Board for some parting words and thoughts.
- Board Members took time to thank Mr. Lin and Ms. Mohindra for their service and to share stories and memories of experiences working with them.

Adjournment

- Ms. Nivar adjourned the meeting at 5:07 PM